

THE PICTURE OF DORIAN
GRAY 231

"Religion?"

"The fashionable substitute for Belief."

"You are a sceptic."

"Never! Scepticism is the beginning of

Faith."

"What are you?"

"To define is to limit/*

"Give me a clue."

"Threads snap. You would lose your way in the
labyrinth/

"You bewilder me. Let us talk of some one

else/*

"Our host is a delightful topic. Years ago he

was christened

Prince Charming."

"Ah! don't remind me of that," cried Dorian Gray.

"Our host is rather horrid this evening."

answered

the

Duchess, colouring. "I believe he thinks that

JMonmomh

married me on purely scientific principles as the

best

specimen

he could find of a modern butterfly."

"Well, I hope he won't stick pins into you,

Duchess/*

laughed Dorian.

"Oh! my maid does that already, Mr. Gray,

when

she

is

annoyed with me."

"And what does she get annoyed with you

about, Duchess?"

"For the most trivial things, Mr. Gray, I assure

you.

Usually

because I come in at ten minutes to nine and

tell

her

that

I

must be dressed by half-past eight."

"How unreasonable of her! You should give

her warning."

"I daren't, Mr. Gray. Why, she invents hats for

me.

You

remember the one I wore at Lady Hillstone's

garden-party?

You don't, but it is nice of you to pretend that

you

do.

Well,

she made it out of nothing. All good hats are

made

out

of

nothing."

"Like all good reputations, Gladys," interrupted

Lord

Henry.

"Every effect that one produces gives one an

enemy.

To

be

popular one must be a mediocrity."

"Not with women," said the Duchess, shaking

her

head;

"and women rule the world. I assure you we

can't

bear

mediocrities. We women, as some one says, love

with

our

ears,

just as you men love with your eyes, if you ever

love at all/

"It seems to me that we never do anything

else,"

murmured

Dorian.

"Ah! then, you never really love, Mr. Gray,"

answered

the

Duchess, with mock sadness.

"My dear Gladys!" cried Lord Henry. "How can

you

say

that? Romance lives by repetition, and

repetition converts